# THE PATH TO REVOLUTION

## THE COMMUNIST PROGRAM

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GUS HALL

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

GUS HALL, General Secretary of the Communist Party, U.S.A., is the author of this pamphlet. This was given as the major report to the Special Convention of the Communist Party, U.S.A. held in New York City, July 4-7, 1968. This report opened the discussion on the *Draft Program of the Communist Party, U.S.A.* The revised draft produced by that discussion is now being prepared for publication.

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### By Gus Hall

### CAPITALISM'S "TIME OF TROUBLES"

Explosive mass upheavals of this, the most profound revolutionary turning point of history, continue to dominate the world scene. The rising militant mass movements and struggles have now become an irresistible force that propels and shapes human events in the capitalist world.

These upheavals are a reflection of a new sense of values, a new mass mood, a new level of expectations by the exploited and oppressed. There is rebellion because of a deterioration in the lot of the people in the capitalist world. There is dissatisfaction and unrest with the status quo of their lot.

This is an epoch when the masses will not accept or tolerate things as they are. There is a new level of expectation which capitalism will not satisfy. Capitalism is a social system out of step with human progress.

This deep dissatisfaction results from a sharply growing contradiction between the people's awareness of the potential arising from the new level of science and technology and their own stagnant or deteriorating conditions. This is an epoch in which the exploited will not accept the existence of poverty and affluence as passive neighbors.

Many factors are contributing to the new mass mood and to this growing consciousness of the gap between what is possible and what exists.

There is the growing example of the world socialist system that is closing this gap. There is the example of the newly liberated countries. The new mood is a mass reaction to the ever sharper polarization of the rich and the poor in the capitalist world. It is a reaction to the technological leap which capitalism turns into an automated destroyer of the economic and moral standards of its victims.

This mass knowledge and new consciousness is heightened by the greatly expanded mass means of communication. There is national consciousness but there is also a new level of world consciousness.

It is a rebellion of the exploited—the poor—the oppressed—the hungry. It is an epoch when the oppressed smell victory in the air. Capitalism and imperialism and their institutions of oppression no longer appear omnipotent and all powerful. It is an epoch of transition from colonialism and capitalism to independence and socialism. What is right and what is wrong, what is just and what is unjust, what is progressive and what is reactionary, and what is revolutionary must be measured by the yardstick of this transition.

In trying to explain to reporters why he withdrew from the race for the presidency, President Johnson inadvertently, and for a fleeting moment, raised the curtain of deception just enough to express a thought that must increasingly haunt and strike a note of terror in the control centers of monopoly capitalism. Johnson said he withdrew from the race because he had a sense that his world was falling apart. He withdrew, he said, because he saw "catastrophe all around him," because his world was "in turmoil and divided."

I know this conveys the impression that Johnson may think the world is his, but in all honesty one must conclude that when he used the expression that the "President's world was falling apart," he was in fact referring to the world of U.S. imperialism and not to his personal world, although *his* political world is also falling apart. It was a reflection of the setbacks U.S. imperialism has suffered. It was a flashback on the American Century—*lost*. In that moment he reflected an objective truth. For that flashing moment, and only for that moment, the credibility gap closed.

He reflected a historic truth—a truth propelled by the force of the unalterable laws of social development. The pen that put that handwriting in a flash on the wall of the White House is in the firm grip of the progressive, the revolutionary forces of this epoch. The same events which to the spokesman of capitalism appear as a "catastrophe," as a "falling apart," are, for the forces of progress, the promise of a great new day. Such is the dialectic of this moment. Like an old structure, capitalism

must come down to make room for the new. This is a moment when the seeming stability of the status quo, the essence of which is supposed to be that famous middle of the road, turns out to be nothing but a roadblock to progress. *Fortune,* the ordinarily silky, soothing voice of monopoly capital, in its current issue editorially reflects on this moment:

> ". . . we are in the midst of a Time of Troubles—one of those periods in which the disintegrative forces in society seem at least temporarily more powerful than the integrative forces."

To capitalism, of course, the forces of social progress always appear as the "disintegrative forces." The true disintegrative forces which stand in the way of the march of human progress are the forces of decaying monopoly capitalism and imperialism. Human society can enter the path of healthy integration only after capitalism has been abolished.

## The New Wave of Struggles

This is a moment when the forces of progress are not in a defensive holding action. In fact, we are now witnessing a new wave of struggles in the capitalist world. We are in a moment of new advances, new victories against world imperialism.

What is most significant is that this new sweep of struggles—struggles against U.S. aggression in Vietnam, struggles around economic demands, struggles for democratic controls, is being paced by the movements in the industrial heart of world capitalism. The new level of struggles in France, Italy, West Germany, Japan, Brazil, Venezuela and, of course, the USA, add a new quality to the upheavals of this new wave.

This brings into the forefront of struggle the working class, with its class understanding. Because the working class is the only consistent revolutionary force, these new waves of struggle can be expected to develop a closer relationship with the issues and trends connected with the transition to socialism. Rebellions will tend to become revolutions, rebels and radicals will tend to become conscious revolutionaries. We are in the rising tide of this new wave of struggles.

Our draft program states: "There is crisis and talk of crisis." The sharpest expression of this crisis is the crisis of U.S. military

aggression. In Vietnam the U.S. policy of imperialist aggression has come up against the realities of this epoch. There it has dramatically encountered the new balance of world forces. There it has met a sector of the forces of national liberation, and a sector of the forces of world socialism. In the rest of the world it has come up against the working-class and other forces of anti-imperialism and peace. These new forces of progress are the victors. The crisis has deepened because U.S. imperialism has suffered a historic defeat. Its plans of conquest are floundering. The superiority in military hardware cannot overcome the disadvantages in the overall balance of forces in this epoch.

This was the handwriting on the wall that L.B.J. saw just before he threw in his presidential towel. Johnson's abdication from the political throne is symbolic of U.S. imperialism's historic moral and military defeat.

The full meaning of such a historic defeat is not easily discerned. Each defeat of imperialism further weakens it. And while such a defeat can and may result in acts of desperation which make imperialism in some ways more dangerous, it can also mean that U.S. imperialism will be forced to retreat from other fields. French imperialism was forced out of Indo-China; then, a few years later, out of Algeria. The handwriting on the wall can mean that U.S. imperialism will be forced out of Africa and Latin America. For this moment also spells heightened struggles and new victories elsewhere.

Such is the general nature of the present moment.

## Areas of Upsurge

In our land this new wave is dramatically represented in the Poor People's Campaign. The black rebellion in the ghettos exploded the myth of U.S. capitalist democracy. In Resurrection City the Poor People's Campaign exploded the myth of affluence and equality. This is a movement of momentous significance. It is in the first place a coalescence of the working-class poor. It is sparked by the oppressed national minorities and groups who are the victims of two layers of oppression and exploitation, of racial and national oppression added to their exploitation as workers.

The June 19th Washington, D.C. demonstration in support of the poor was a historic united action. It was an action of the

poor from all sectors, but it was also a new high in bringing together the oppressed minorities, including the American Indians and the Mexican-Americans, and in the first place Afro-Americans, with a meaningful sector of the trade union movement. It is the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and the trade union movement that must get the credit for turning the action into a historic event. While it was supported by students, it was not a student-based action. This was above all a working-class action.

The new wave of struggle is also represented in the impressive peace actions of April. The task now is to move the forces for peace out of the momentary period of inaction that has set in since the opening of the Paris talks.

The new wave is represented in the ghetto rebellions, in the demonstrative mass reactions to the murder of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It is reflected in the new militancy of our working class—in the strike struggles. It is reflected in the new sectors of the working population who are organizing unions and hitting the bricks in picket lines, particularly among the lowest paid workers—the sanitation workers in New York, in Memphis and now in Florida.

It is dramatically reflected in the grass-roots electoral revolt. It was this new wave that swept Johnson out of the presidential race. It is reflected in the nature of the movements around the candidacies of Senator McCarthy and the late Senator Kennedy, as it is in the election of Negro mayors and congressmen.

It is shown in the emergence of the new Left-radical electoral formation in a number of states—in the birth of Freedom and Peace parties. It appears in the emergence of new, broad people's independent political formations, made up of movements that are frozen out of the Democratic Party by the encrusted machines. At no other moment in our political history has the fraud of the two-party system been so exposed in the eyes of the millions as it is being exposed in these very days.

A new wave of electoral experiences during the past year has now placed the question of a mass breakaway from the two-party system on today's political agenda. The possibility of this breakaway has resulted in new maneuvers and new demagogy by the political power centers. This exposure—this breakaway—is taking place because of the independent movements and

struggles within the Democratic Party. It is an electoral reflection of the mass movements and struggle of recent years.

The new wave is reflected in the nature of the growing influence of our Party and in our ability to participate in these movements. It is reflected in the important beginnings of Party growth, in recruiting from the ranks of the working class.

This new sweep developing in the capitalist world has also had its reflection in the calling of a world Communist conference and in the deliberations at Budapest. Its influence will continue in the growing unity of the world Communist movement as it prepares for the conference to be held in Moscow in the near future.

As do all turning points of history, this one also presents dialectical opposites. There are present simultaneously the great advances in socialist progress—the great promise, the explosive potential—on the one hand, and serious dangers and pitfalls on the other. Such a danger is inherent in the racist Wallace campaign for the presidency. This campaign has become the rallying point for all forces of extreme reaction. It has become the electoral instrument of the Birch Society, the KKK and all other extreme racist and anti-labor elements in the country. It would be a serious mistake to underestimate the potential of this danger. The extreme demagogy misleads many into thinking that a vote for Wallace is a vote of protest, a vote for a "change."

At moments like this, class relations sharpen. Reaction, sensing the tightening noose, moves to head off defeat by increasing its demagogy and by introducing fascist measures against the people. The carrot and the club are used simultaneously.

It is therefore a moment of victories, of a growth of new confidence and new strength, but it is also a moment when the masses must keep a watchful eye on the moves of monopoly capitalism.

## OUR DRAFT PROGRAM

Our Party's draft program is our reflection of this moment. It is a program for this turning point in history.

Our program correctly reflects the new wave of struggles.

Our program gives expression to the promise and the potential of this moment.

Our program warns against the pitfalls and dangers.

This program is our assessment of the moment. It is our concept of the path ahead. It is our guide to victory. It outlines the Marxist concept of the path to a socialist U.S.A.

The first discussion on the nature of our basic program took place five years ago. The first draft was adopted by our 18th Convention two years ago.

That draft was enthusiastically received by our Party. It was welcomed and discussed by a large section of the Left and radical movements. We sold 50,000 copies of it and both requests for more copies and letters discussing it continue to come into our national office. The program has become an important document in the dialogue between our Party and significant sections of the American people.

In many parts of the world our program serves as basic material for studies about the U.S.A.

In this over-all sense the first draft of our program served our Party very well. It is an important factor in re-establishing our Party as a viable component of our country's political life. And, contrary to many fears, we have been able to produce the first draft, conduct the discussion and produce the second draft without diverting from the mass struggles and our responsibilities in the mass movements.

It is the overwhelming consensus of our Party, expressed through the pre-convention discussion, that this new draft before you is a very much improved document. It has been the subject of a lively discussion. Over 70 articles were written and published in this discussion.

The improvements in this new draft are in response to the criticisms and suggestions made in the discussion of the first draft. For more than three months we have had a discussion of this new draft. The task of this convention is to make further improvements and provide for its editing and publication.

The present draft is a further development of our program in many ways. It is also shorter. The language has been brought closer to the people. The thoughts are expressed in shorter and simpler sentences. Many of the political and theoretical weaknesses in the first draft have been eliminated.

The writing of this draft program is a historic achievement for our Party. It has greatly added to our Party's influence. And

besides the expected gains, there are many important fringe benefits from producing a program.

## A Revolutionary Marxist-Leninist Document

The five years of discussion have forced us to think about strategic concepts and to formulate them more clearly. It has forced us to become more concerned about specific U.S. realities, historic and present. We have had to think about the relationship of today's movements and mass actions to the struggle for socialism. The discussion has deepened our understanding of the interrelationship between theory and tactics of mass movements, between policy and tactics, and the nature of the relationship between strategic concepts and the struggles and movements of today. It has prodded us to look to our working-class moorings and check whether they are tight enough. For many in our Party some of the ideas have been discoveries. For all of us it has been a refresher course in Marxism-Leninism. We are a better party because of our work in putting our basic thoughts on paper.

No one would say our draft program is without shortcomings or weaknesses. We have not yet resolved all of the questions. In fact, we never will. A program should not be viewed as a finished document—as a document for all times. Some have argued that we should not adopt the draft program because we should have more discussions. There is no contradiction here. We can and should do both.

We will make provisions to continue the discussions. The areas that need more discussion have now become more sharply pinpointed. In general they are the anti-monopoly concept, the character of the present epoch, black liberation, the role of the working class and the path to socialism.

Each national convention of the Party has the authority and the responsibility to review the program and to amend it or to rewrite it. And when reality has changed to the point that it calls for a new set of strategic concepts, then the Party will have to write a new program.

But it is the opinion of most that this present draft is a reflection of today's reality. I think it is a good draft. It is a revolutionary, a Marxist-Leninist document.

We must be realistic about the problems. A program, of necessity, must deal with strategic concepts. And we must accept the fact that it is not always possible to formulate, definitively and concretely, a strategic concept. Strategic concepts are an assessment of future developments, of what the movements, forces and developments will look like when they have reached a new level, and have themselves helped to create a new objective reality.

Therefore, there are times when we have to be satisfied with a less concise formulation. Sometimes we have to wait until further developments take place, when forces have developed to a higher plane, and when we can have the benefit of further experiences, before we can cross all of the t's.

The fact that strategic concepts are a projection of developments in the future, however, is not a license for the presentation of ideas that are speculative and unreal. Strategic concepts are not policies for an imaginary world of unreality. The real world of today is molding the real world of tomorrow.

The realities of today must provide the source and the justification for strategic concepts. The longer-range outlook of strategic concepts does not release us from a tactical responsibility.

If we are not yet able to project clearly how one or another trend will develop, it is not a crime to present it in less definitive terms. The weakness would be either to present it in purely speculative terms or not to do so at all. That we have difficulty in some formulations can not be an excuse for not writing a program.

We should reject any idea of not adopting this new draft simply because there are some weaknesses in it. With this kind of logic we would never adopt a program, because we will never have a perfect program. Such a move would be a serious setback for our Party. That some Marxist parties have not written programs is not a weighty argument. It seems to me one could now say that maybe things would be better today if the Communist Party of China had worked out a more definitive program.

## The Challenge to Our Program

We are not writing our program in a vacuum. We are not the only ones putting out a program. There are a number of groups within the radical-Left circuit also writing and adopting draft programs. Some elements in the Socialist Party are working

on new programs. They are being presented as a challenge to our program. In fact they are being presented as a replacement, as a substitute for it. We cannot, by inaction or postponements, fail to meet these challenges.

These other programs are a challenge to our program, not because of some difficulties in facts or in a word or a formulation here or there. They are not variations of our outlook. They do not just represent tactical differences. They present different basic concepts. Thus, they are a challenge to the basic concept of Marxism-Leninism. We must meet this challenge.

We will value and understand our own program better if we understand more deeply the nature of this challenge. We reject and we expose the concepts of these other programs because they are harmful to the revolutionary movement. We reject them because they lead to dead-end corners. A defense of Marxism-Leninism, a defense of our Party and its basic program, is a defense of the working-class revolutionary movement.

In today's world, socialism based on Marxism-Leninism is the only revolutionary world reality. It is not an abstraction. It is the social system and the ideology which is relevant to world and domestic developments.

While we do not wish to equate a footnote on a single page with a chapter of history, we must go beneath the glitter of the phrase in these programs and probe deeper to see what it is that gives rise in them to a programmed, computer-like repetition of similar abstractions and phrases.

The answer is very close to the surface. The root cause for these similarities is that the "programming" has a class base. It is that, *in one form or another, they all reject the centrality of the class struggle as a basic concept.* Some ignore it; others openly challenge its relevance. Their programs all rest on a wrong premise. This concept is the key question for all groups. It is central for our Party, for our program. It is the rudder for any revolutionary movement. Without it, a movement will be aimless, directionless, at the mercy of subjective winds. The centrality of the class struggle is the centrality of objective truth.

## Struggle Against Petty-Bourgeois Radicalism

There is a current theory that in this epoch the "class struggle" has been replaced by a "social struggle." This is an attempt

to get around the class nature of capitalism. It is clear that if there is a class struggle there are antagonistic classes, and so one cannot avoid dealing with the working class. But in the bodyless, odorless, classless and meaningless concept of a so-called "social struggle" one gets away from class reality. In being a spokesman for "social struggles" it is not necessary to use words that grate on the sensitivities of liberals or others who are trying so hard to hide the reality of classes and the class struggle. Who cannot be for "social struggle"? And just as one can be for "radical change" but not for a revolutionary change, one can speak against the "establishment" and not be against capitalism.

All capitalist-supporting philosophies, ideas, literature and policies, are in the first place attempts to hide the class nature of capitalist exploitation, the class nature of capitalism from A to Z. Hence petty-bourgeois radicalism and capitalist ideology are two sides of a one-way street.

There are dozens of variations of Herbert Marcuse floating around—Marcuse, who is himself only a present-day variation of a hundred and fifty years of anti-working-class, petty-bourgeois radicalism. Such radicalism has always tried to get away from dealing with the class structure of capitalist society. It hides its reformist concepts behind radical phrases. It short-circuits a revolutionary trend. It is opportunism in a corner.

Before going into some of its ideas, I want to make a general observation.

If we are to conduct an effective struggle, we in the Party must not confuse radicalization, militancy, the radical, militant fighting spirit which refuses to accept the status quo, with petty-bourgeois radicalism—with anarchism. One is a healthy rebellion on which the revolutionary movement builds. The other is an attempt to misdirect the militancy into anti-working class channels.

Our attitude towards the process of radicalization and the development of militancy in all sectors of the population must be positive and enthusiastic. In fact, our struggle with petty-bourgeois radicalism is for the right of leadership of radicalized masses.

There are two kinds of errors within our Party on this question. Both arise out of an inability to separate the two aspects. Some find comfort for their Right-opportunistic, conservative

positions in identifying militancy and the process of radicalization with petty-bourgeois radicalism. Others hide their petty-bourgeois radical concepts by identifying them with the process of radicalization and growing militancy.

There are some who are influenced by these wrong concepts. This influence is expressed in confusion, in pessimism, in cynicism. It is also expressed in a resistance to taking up the challenge to Marxist concepts. Some feel that if red-baiting and slander against our Party or anti-working class ideas come from the Left, we should remain silent because if we take up the challlenge, it gives our Party a conservative image. Does this reluctance to accept the challenge not arise from confusing the two distinct phenomena—radicalization and petty bourgeois "radicalist" posturing?

Then there is the other weakness. It expresses itself in a lack of appreciation of the positive nature of the process of radicalization and growing militancy. It sees this process as a momentary passing phenomenon. It shows up in an impatience, in a critical attitude toward the radicalization of the youth. It leads to conservatism, to a lack of militancy. It leads to a position of being observers of reality and not changers of it.

We must correct both errors.

The pre-convention discussion has placed in sharp focus the need for a struggle against wrong concepts and influences that come from both the Right and the Left. The Left influence stems from the pressures of petty-bourgeois radicalism, the Right influence from the pressures of Right opportunism. An abstract discussion of which of the two weaknesses is on the ascendancy or is the most potent at any given moment is, as a rule, a way of justifying one's own particular weakness. There are no benefits from trying to balance the two off.

The Right opportunist influences cannot be fought by encouraging or ignoring the influences of petty-bourgeois radicalism. The reverse is also true, because you cannot fight opportunism with opportunism. We do not need "experts" who concentrate on either side of this two-sided struggle. When that happens, then one tendency feeds the other. Each feels that the other's one-sidedness justifies his own one-sidedness. This becomes an endless spiral. A two-sided struggle is not a balancing act, it is not a process of standing still and rejecting wrong ideas.

It is a process of struggle for correct ideas, a process of presenting new ideas, new considerations based on new experiences.

Petty-bourgeois radicalism and anarchism are not corrections of conservatism, and conservatism is no answer to petty-bourgeois radicalism. They feed each other.

We welcome and fight to lead the new militancy while we reject the concepts of those who either mislead it into dead-end corners or stifle it by the dead hand of conservatism.

We cannot win the right to lead, unless we do both things, unless we become an integral part of, and fully understand the process of radicalization on the one hand and successfully accept the challenge against non-working-class and anti-working class concepts on the other.

It is also necessary to note that petty-bourgeois radicalism does not hold its audience. Because of life's experiences most serious workers very quickly pass through it and move into other movements, and many join our Party. To the extent that we improve our work on both of these fronts the newly radicalized sectors of our people will join our Party. Our Party needs those new militant forces.

## "Christmas Goose Capitalism"

One variation of this school concludes that "only those *outside of the production process* can be a force to change the order of things." This concept, of course, rules out the 65 million workers in the U.S. "production process" and their families who make up the majority of our people. But in a basic sense it rules out exploitation at the point of production as the heart, as the incubator, as the root of classes and the class struggle. To do this is to rule out classes, the class struggle, and of course, the working class. It is a rejection of the class nature of capitalism.

Petty-bourgeois radicalism speaks about a "neo-capitalism" in which exploitation at the point of production is not the root of the evils of capitalism. But in their books this is no problem. On the contrary, this is the "proof," this is the theoretical explanation for their main contention—that the working class cannot be a revolutionary force, that it has gone over to the enemy. This is the conclusion of all who challenge the centrality of the class struggle.

There are other variations of this concept. Some say, "In

an industrial society, the working class has lost its *revolutionary spirit* and therefore also its *historic progressive role.*" Others say "the working class has become a part of the establishment." Others add that "the working class has become a partner and an affluent recipient of the loot of imperialism." Still others speak about the "new working class." But they do so in such terms that, to say the least, it leaves the door open to an interpretation that the changes are so "fundamental," the "new working class" is so "different," that one should have some doubts and questions whether it can fulfill its historic mission. They make a slight concession and say that maybe there are no questions about the world working class in general, but there must be at least some doubts about the U.S. working class because it is so "new"—so "different."

It is necessary to say a few special words about the concept of "neo-capitalism" put forth by Marcuse and others, and now peddled by the *Guardian* and other sectors of petty-bourgeois radicalism as big new discoveries.

What is this so-called neo-capitalism?

It is a kind of Christmas goose capitalism. They say neo-capitalism is *forced* to stuff its people, to *force-feed* them—like a Christmas goose. Why does neo-capitalism do this? Because, they say, it produces so much and needs an internal market for this huge output. They call it "compulsive consumption." They say the new technology now forces capitalism to stuff its people.

What are the instruments of this stuffing, this forced feeding? The trade unions, they say, with their economic demands, with their collective bargaining. Some of them agree with big business that "the unions are too big—too successful."

This leads to their conclusion: "The new technology of automation and cybernation . . . create a new set of relationships which transcend the *traditional conception* of the *exploitation of labor as the basic motor of class conflict and revolutionary consciousness.*"

This is all old hat now. In neo-capitalism exploitation is not the source of class conflict. This supposedly leads to a "one-dimensional society" and eliminates the dimensions of two classes. The social struggle in a "one-dimensional society" of course eliminates the class struggle of a two-class society. The "stuffers" and the "stuffed" become one happy family.

They say it also leads to the "elimination of cyclical crises of overproduction." It leads to a situation in which neo-capitalism "does not need foreign markets." Therefore, supposedly, it should lead to an end to imperialism. And neo-capitalism "can only pursue the upward spiral of increasing commodity production by promoting an upward spiral of increasing compulsive individual consumption."

But what are the central aims of these theories? Like all the others they are anti-working class.

Trade unions and strikes become instruments for "stuffing the goose." It is obvious that if one accepts this concept in any degree he will lose all enthusiasm for strikes. He will, in fact, be against strikes, because he will see them only as a means for adding to "compulsive consumption."

Thus, they say it is no longer possible to speak of the working class as a "revolutionary force." And they draw similar conclusions about the black liberation movement.

"The black power movement is in the direction of black capitalism . . . In fact it has become increasingly clear that at the present time there is little basis for the development of a class-conscious mass movement in opposition to capitalism. The basic demand of the ghetto insurrections for goods (consumption)" (stuffing the goose) . . . "reveals the movement to be neither class-conscious nor revolutionary."

And further: "Trade unions which fight only for higher wages (consumption)" (stuffing the goose) "are engaged in a conservative, if not *reactionary struggle* . . . That is why other social strata—industrial workers and the poor—have been incapable of developing a struggle relevant to the current era."

And because of all this the "old Left" "has become at best irrelevant, at worst a *destructive* and a *reactionary* influence." That their neo-capitalism has nothing to do with reality does not seem to bother its authors. This nonsense is presented as theories for a "new Left." Its anti-working-class ideas are presented behind "Left" sounding phrases.

Such is the path of petty-bourgeois radicalism. It is not difficult to argue against it when it is stated openly. What is more difficult is to detect that which is covered, or to fight against those of its influences that are not open and direct. But make no mistake

about it—we have the choice of meeting this challenge or being engulfed by it.

It is an anti-working-class, reactionary concept, sugar-coated by Left phrases.

This same thought is expressed in the concept that the road to victory against imperialism, against capitalism, is through the encirclement of the urban working-class areas by military forces made up of people who come from "outside of the production process." This concept is father to a number of derivative ideas and some place questions in a manner that inadvertently gives substance to such ideas.

Some are satisfied just to tag the working class as corrupt and hopeless. Others stretch the concept of "labor aristocracy" so that it covers the workers of the organized mass production industries. Or it is argued that because workers are organized they can be ruled out as not being interested in broader "democratic struggles." Such over-simplified concepts open the door for anti-working-class ideas. No amount of verbal gyrations can erase the fact that the root of capitalist relations and the propellant for a socialist revolution and the molder of the revolutionary force is the "productive process" of capitalism.

## A WORKING CLASS PARTY

Our program must stand four-square on the centrality of the class struggle. Our program must rest on the concept of classes and the role of the working class. Our Party is not a party *for* the working class. Our Party is a working-class party. Our program is a working-class program. This is the foundation for our concentrated efforts, for our tactics, policies and strategic concepts. This is the Marxist-Leninist approach to the struggle for human progress.

We are not reluctant to discuss changes that are taking place in the makeup of the working class. We do and will discuss the effects of these changes. But we reject any discussion that is based on a rejection of the class approach to struggle.

We will discuss what is new in the ranks of the working class, but we reject the concept of a "new working class" that is so "new" that it has lost its place in history, and its role in the struggle for social progress.

We work with, give leadership to and hail the movements

and struggles of masses who are "outside of the production process." We value their role, but we reject all concepts which place these sectors as the heart—the base—of the revolutionary movements. The movements and struggles of these sectors can be victorious only if they are allied with the struggles and movements of those within the production process.

Our outlook—our very being as a political force—rests on our scientific convictions that the forces of progress can be victorious only if they are allied with and base themselves on the struggles of the working class. The battle-scarred roadway of class struggle is the only pathway to human progress. Any theory that evades or waters down the centrality of this question leads to the swamp of opportunism and to defeat.

## On Opportunism

In our discussions about the U.S. working class there has been much said about influences of "opportunism," about the role of a "labor aristocracy," about the level of class consciousness and the level of socialist consciousness. These are all important and closely interrelated questions.

They are very important questions for us. Our strategic concepts must rest on how this consciousness develops. The development of these higher levels of consciousness is a central responsibility of our Party.

They are not theoretical abstractions. To pin an ideological label on the behavior of a class is no solution.

One cannot assess or understand the U.S. working class or its ideological level without taking into consideration its historic development and the historic development of U.S. capitalism. The successes of our working class in economic struggles represent a many-sided development. It is related to the origins of this working class, to the abundance of nature's riches in our land, to the period in which capitalism developed in the United States. It is related to the position of U.S. capitalism in the two world wars, to the development of U.S. imperialism, etc.

It is wrong to make abstract assessments of the ideological currents as if these historic conditions did not exist. Our working-class struggles have taken place in a specific set of historical circumstances. It is the struggles of this set of circumstances that have brought us to our present level of development.

It is, therefore, in this context that we must consider all problems, including the ideological development of our working class. It is for this reason that a simple comparison of wage scales with those in some other countries cannot be the yardstick of which workers are or are not a part of the "labor aristocracy."

If opportunism were an explanation of the status of the working class, our task would indeed be simple. There are some who labor under this assumption. The overall level of development or the weakness of the working class cannot be explained by or equated with opportunism. That U.S. workers have not yet overthrown capitalism is not explained only by the influences of opportunism. That they have not yet developed a higher level of class consciousness is not explained only by the influences of opportunism.

Opportunism is a much more conscious current. It contains an element of being bought, of conscious selling out, of betrayal. Therefore it must be seen in a narrower, a more limited framework. Therefore it is not synonymous with overall weaknesses or overall level of development. Opportunism does not influence overall developments. It is one of the factors that explains some of the weaknesses. But it cannot be equated with weaknesses. The level of consciousness rests on a many-sided historic process.

The super-profits of imperialism are an important factor in maintaining the economic base of opportunism, but here again, this is not the only factor. Monopoly domination is also a factor that creates such a base. And capitalism can create the base for opportunism even previous to its monopoly or imperialist development. Oversimplification leads to one-sided conclusions.

Some have taken Lenin's remarks about the opportunism of the Social Democratic parties and mechanically used them in discussing weaknesses of the U.S. working class.

What is wrong with this mechanical adaptation? Why will this transplant fail? It will fail because Lenin was speaking about the opportunism of leaders of political parties, about a conscious, deliberate betrayal of the class by leaders of political parties. Of course, there is a relationship between the two, but they are not the same.

Lenin was speaking about opportunism of a different level.

You cannot mechanically apply such remarks to a discussion of the influence of opportunism within a class. Lenin did not do so.

When Lenin spoke about the reasons for the penetration of opportunism into the parties of the Second International, he pointed to the influences of the petty-bourgeois elements in these parties. He spoke about the petty-bourgeois and the non-working class origins of the Social Democratic leaders. Any discussion about influences of opportunism that hides the influence of the petty-bourgeois element is itself objectively opportunistic.

## Who is the Enemy?

We hear much about what is the over-all or central thrust of a document. How does our program stand in over-all thrust in regard to the working class?

It can stand some improvement.

The greater part of the section on the working class deals with the negative features of the working class and the trade union movement. I would not necessarily change that. But it becomes one-sided in the over-all draft because of the lack of positive treatment.

But I am even more concerned about the over-all thrust of *some* of the discussion that has taken place around our program.

If one were to add up the list of "shortcomings," "crimes" and "sins" of our working class that has come to the program committee, as suggestions to be included, it would be a volume by itself. Much of the pre-convention discussion material is witness to the influences of petty-bourgeois radical, anti-working class influences even within our Party.

In the discussion material on the section dealing with our working class there are phrases stating that the workers "have become bourgeois in their mode of life—in the size of their earnings." How is this conclusion sustained? By giving figures of general per capita income. It seems to me a class-conscious worker knows that the per capita income formula is one of history's worst frauds. It is specifically designed to mislead, to hide the nature of capitalist society and to give the impression of over-all affluence. It is a formula for a "one-dimensional society."

Let us see how it works. In 1965 the general per capita income after taxes was $2,332. In the next two years there was a gain of about 3½ per cent each year.

Now let us look at the per capita income of the 44 million wage earners' families. In 1965 it was $1,021. That's about 41 per cent of the general per capita income. But it is even worse. During the two years when the *general* per capita income *went up* by 3½ per cent annually, *the per capita income of the wage earners went down* by 3 per cent one year and 2 per cent the next!

Do these facts support any idea that the workers are "bourgeois" in their size of earnings, or can sustain a "bourgeois mode of life"? I don't think so. Classless statistics, and classless economics lead to classless politics and to classless concepts in general.

The "labor aristocracy" formula is used by some to level every possible slander against the working class, including the allegation that it is the working class which is responsible for anti-Communism. The evils and sins of capitalism become the evils and sins of the working class. But to make it plain whom they are talking about, certain writers in the pre-convention discussion are critical because the draft program directs it fire at the class collaborationist leadership of the trade unions and not on the overall "aristocratic" influences on the working class. One writes: "In the absence of a principled Marxist leadership to turn the tide (of labor aristocracy) against their policies, the opportunists can become *the dominant and potential fascist leaders of the future.*"

That workers have been misled into supporting fascism is true. That we must win the working class in the struggle against fascism is true. But history is witness that by and large the source and the cadre of fascism come from monopoly capital and from the petty-bourgeois and non-class elements.

This same thought is expressed in another discussion article as follows: "We must see to it that the working class does not become the basis for fascism." That workers can be misled into supporting reaction is obvious in the support Wallace is getting in the cities, but this is not the historic role for the class.

Our task is to build an anti-fascist consciousness and a movement of our people that is based on the working class. Any other conclusion is imbedded in the logic, in the very nature, of petty-

bourgeois radicalism. It is a line of thought that does not have a class rudder; the class lines are not closely drawn; the progress of thought does not start from a clearly defined position. It is a subjective response to the evils of capitalism. It is a classless rebellion. It is not programmed against the enemy.

When the working class does not respond in accordance with this subjective reaction, in line with its individual anger, this brings on a sense of frustration. The subjective response turns into a negative attitude toward the working class, and in the end the working class becomes the enemy.

## Our Fixed Star — The Working Class

Rockets for space travel are programmed to get their bearings from a distant fixed star. They can maneuver; they can change orbits, because they have this fixed point of reference. Without this they would become aimless objects buffeted by the cross currents and pulls of the endless forces of the universe. For Marxism, the class struggle, the role of the working class is that fixed star of reference. We are a movement that is programmed to get our bearings from that central point of reference.

Sometimes I am asked, "Why don't you discuss more often the weaknesses of our working class or the trade unions?" More, it is said: "It seems you even resist discussing the weaknesses of the working class." That is a fair accusation. In a sense, it is true.

I think it is a law of a working-class party that we cannot—and therefore I will not—discuss or probe the weaknesses of the working class within an overall negative or anti-working class framework. Our first responsibility is to fight the overall anti-working class attitudes. This is basic to the class approach. We can meaningfully discuss weaknesses only in an overall positive partisan framework. Those who are preoccupied with weaknesses of the working class, those who overstate these weaknesses, will never be a factor in building a revolutionary movement. We need to seek out the positive factors; we need to build on them. That is how we are going to be able to root out the weaknesses of our class.

This is a fundamental difference between our Party and some of the other Left groups. This is a fundamental difference between Marxism-Leninism and petty-bourgeois radicalism.

Whether a Party maintains a class orientation can be measured by its theoretical position. But much more important is how it is reflected in the everyday application of policies. How it determines its daily priorities in time, emphasis, and resources is an important yardstick. Any group that is preoccupied with discussions about the weaknesses of the working class and has no time or ability to give leadership to workers, is not a working class organization. The discussion around the program has brought to the surface serious theoretical weaknesses. But the real depth of this weakness can only be seen in the daily work of our Party. There is a need to reconstruct our Party as a working-class party, as a working-class party of black-white unity.

There is much talk about the need to struggle against the wrong policies of trade union leadership. But how many of us, whether in shops or not, are active in building rank-and-file movements? How many of us are active in selling the paper or literature or distributing leaflets at shop gates? What leadership have we given nationally or what leadership do the districts give to industrial concentration? Some comrades have even raised questions about the "dangers"—"ideological dangers"—in bringing young workers into the unions.

More than anything else, at this moment, the working-class movement, our Party, the revolutionary movement needs people with "doctorates" based on first-hand experiences of exploitation in a steel mill. More than anything else, we need Communists with "master's degrees" in first-hand experience in the speed-up of an automobile factory. We need "bachelor's degrees" in automated coal mining, in the attrition of life in a sweatshop in textile, machine-building or rubber. We need comrades who are doing post-graduate work in leadership in raising class consciousness, socialist consciousness, within shops and in unions. We need experts on how to fight racism at the point of production. *Then let us discuss the weaknesses of the working class based on these experiences of leading workers in struggle.*

A working-class party, above all else, needs workers from the basic industries, from the mills, mines and factories in its membership and leadership councils. Among delegates to a convention like this working comrades from the shops should have first priority. In many district conventions this was not

so. Above all else, our program must be directed to achieve this end.

Therefore, I do not resist discussing weaknesses or the influence of opportunism in the ranks of the working class in general; I just don't think we are going to correct weaknesses or make any kind of a contribution by doing so in an overall negative framework.

Anti-Communism is the central ideological pillar of imperialism. Some of the programs of the non-Communist "Left" try to skirt this issue. In fact as the reactionary circles have increased their red baiting, some sections of the "Left" have retreated on the issue of anti-Communism. There is a certain amount of opportunistic corrosion on this issue. It is the most dangerous trap of reaction. Many play the game of reaction by some variation of redbaiting. Most of it is by inference. For example, some state, "To be effective, and to correct the mistakes of older movements, we cannot be subservient to any foreign Communist movement." In this case, the door to an inference about the slander of "foreign agents" in "older movements" is obviously and deliberately left open. Also, anti-Sovietism from the Left has made some headway during the past year. It is not a matter of honestly disagreeing with some policies of the Soviet Union. In too many cases it is anti-Sovietism that serves as an opportunistic way of seeking respectability and evading a red-baiting attack from the ideological camp of imperialism.

There is a third and a final similarity in the positions and programs of many of the Left groups that is basically different from ours.

Behind the phrases about "achieving black and white unity sometime in the future or under socialism," they have, in fact, given up the struggle for unity of black and white. For us, the concepts of black and white unity, of unity of the working class, black and white, of alliance of the Afro-American people's movement and the labor movement, are the foundation for progress. Not to fight racism, not to fight for black and white unity based on the elimination of racism now is to retreat. It is giving in to racism.

As these groups try to avoid coming to grips with the centrality of the class question, so they try to avoid coming to grips with the crucial question of racism.

Our program is a challenge to these wrong concepts.

Our program can serve as a guidepost—as a marker in the stream of political and ideological currents.

Our program is a correct reflection of the realities of this moment. It does not opportunistically skirt difficult questions. Our concepts are based on a correct understanding of how the laws of capitalist development operate on the American scene. It is the product of the application of Marxism-Leninism to our specific reality.

## BLACK LIBERATION

The one section of our draft program that has created more discussion than any other is the section on black liberation.

As the question of Negro freedom is crucial for our country, it is a crucial question for our program. It has a bearing and a relationship on all other sections of the program.

It is understandable why we are having some difficulties in formulating this section. When there is continuous struggle, motion and daily change, it is more difficult to generalize experiences.

Because of this, there are present some differences in the estimation of exactly what are the main trends, in what direction will some of the present mass currents go, how they will develop, etc.

But the basic reason for the difficulties is that black oppression in the United States has a number of unique and distinct features. It is a special system of oppression within a special set of circumstances.

It is a system of special oppression of a people within a nation. The oppression is racial. The oppression is of a national minority. The oppressed by and large are of the working class. Being exploited at the point of production determines a class status for the great majority of Afro-Americans. Thus the main economic issue is not land. There is discrimination in housing, education, in every phase of life, but the main economic issues are encased within the structure of U.S. capitalism's industrial production processes. It is a special system of oppression interwoven into the fabric of capitalist exploitation. The oppression is economic, political, cultural and social. It is a ghettoized oppression.

The struggle is as many-sided as is the oppression. The struggle is for national expression but the struggle is also to break down the walls of segregation and discrimination. Thus the struggle is both for national identity and for equality and freedom within and as a part of the nation.

The struggles to break the chains of the special oppression have developed movements both toward integration and separation. What is important is that they are both movements of struggle. They are both directed at the system that creates the inequality. These trends are not necessarily contradictory. They are inter-related and interwoven. Neither are tendencies of resignation or the acceptance of the status quo or defeat.

The present tendency of the Afro American community is a reaction to 300 years of struggle to break the chains of a special oppression.

It is a reaction to 300 years of efforts to break the racist barriers that hold the Afro American from the mainstream of national life.

It is a reaction to 300 years of violent resistance and indifference by the majority of white Americans to the efforts to break down the walls of segregation and discrimination.

They are reactions to 300 years of cruel persecution, indignities and injustices. This struggle has now reached a qualitative turning point.

Therefore, the future developments in the struggle of black and white unity—and how the trends and struggle of the 25 million Afro Americans will develop in large part will be determined by how fast white America, and especially white working-class America, will move to break down the walls, the system that oppresses 25 millions of its fellow Americans. It depends on how quickly white America realizes that this is necessary for its own self-interests. It depends to a large measure on how quickly white America extricates itself from the net of racism.

This is why the question of struggle for Freedom is an American question. This is why it is a crisis of the nation. How this crisis is solved will be a big factor determining how all trends in the Afro American community will develop.

There are some differences on just how some of these unique features of the struggle against the special system of oppression are going to develop in the period ahead.

Some of these problems are still going to be with us for some time. But the main feature of the discussions around the draft is that there is a basic agreement on most questions. This provides a solid basis for our program even if we are not able at this moment to formulate some questions in their detail.

## On The Right To Self-Determination

How the program should state the question of the right to self-determination has come up in our discussions.

It has been said: "We must stand unalterably for the right of self-determination." This again is one of those statements that leads one to ask, "Just how do you mean that?"

If it is a restatement of our basic Leninist position as regards the liberation of oppressed nations, or developing nations, then it is a statement of a truth. Of course, that is our position. And as far as I know, no one in our Party has challenged it.

No one challenges the correctness of the position on self-determination. But the application of this Leninist principle to the unique situation arising from the oppression and the struggles of 25 million black Americans is a different matter.

Therefore it is always important for us to determine whether we are all using terms and words in the same manner. New experiences can, and often do change the meaning of old expressions, of old concepts. But when we use old expressions in a new context giving them a new meaning, we have to say so.

The concept—"the right of self-determination"— has an accepted political meaning. The accepted meaning is very closely related to relations between nations and states. It is a demand for a nation to have the right to decide for itself its own affairs, and what relationships it will have with other nations—and especially what relations it will maintain with the nation that has oppressed it. Above all, it includes the right of separation or the right to some other form of relations, such as an equal in a federation of nations and states, etc.

This *accepted* meaning of the concept of separation is of necessity linked to the realities of a common territory and a separate economy, expressed in a political and state structure.

This is the accepted usage of the concept of the right of self-determination.

Our strategic concepts must flow from our reality. If our

reality does not fit into some generalized concept drawn from other experiences, then we must create our own generalized concepts.

There are many similarities in the reality of black oppression to other experiences. To the extent that there are, we should draw on them.

Strategic concepts are an estimation of trends. Therefore, we have to ask: On the basis of present-day trends and currents, can we conclude that the Afro American community is developing in the direction of a separate territory and a separate economy? I don't think the trends would sustain such a conclusion. It would be overdrawing on the separatist tendencies that do exist.

On the other hand, it seems that from this correct assessment of today's reality we therefore should not conclude, or write a program on the basis that such a development could never take place.

There are enough facts on hand that dictate the need for a sense of flexibility, the need for us to keep some doors open to the possibility that if not in full scope, that some specific element, or feature, of such a path may develop.

Now a thought about the similarities between the reality that gives rise to the general concept of self-determination and the struggle for black liberation.

Because we do not accept the concept as applicable to today's reality, because of the specific unique circumstances of black oppression, this should not blind us to the kinship, to the affinity that does exist between the two.

The ideological propellant in the struggle of an oppressed nation and of an oppressed national minority or nationality is basically the same. In both cases the nature of the oppression —the oppression of a people—forces a sense of national identity. In one situation, a common territory and the existence or the possibility of a separate economy creates the basis for a specific kind of solution.

While recognizing the differences in the two settings of oppression and in the differences in the possible paths to victory—it seems we have to keep in mind the following thought:

While the *form* of the concept of self-determination does not apply to the present realities, the spirit, the ideological essence,

the essential political and moral quality behind the concept is present.

Is not this same essential quality—ideological essence—expressed in the struggle for black power?

Is it not the same essential quality that propels the struggles for such practical concepts as control of municipal councils, school boards, anti-poverty programs, etc? Because the oppression takes place in a special set of circumstances—the nature and the path of struggle and the solution are also special and unique.

Therefore, do we not see here in operation the same essential quality—but under a different set of circumstances?

Is not the essence of the concept of Freedom—of being free to make decisions as to what use to make of equality when it is won—the same as national liberation under a special set of circumstances?

Is not the same essential quality also that which motivates the Afro Americans toward separate organizational forms? Is it not motivated by the right to determine one's own affairs? It seems to me it is very important for all Americans to understand this special essence of the struggle for freedom and equality.

It seems to me that this concept—an interpretation that takes into account both the differences—but also the similarities, that takes into account the unique and the similar features of black oppression in the U.S.A. is the key in the formulation of our strateic concepts.

When we consider strategic concepts in the struggle to end jim crow, there are a number of other specific factors that have to be taken into consideration.

Amongst these factors the class question is very important.

In a basic sense Afro-Americans are working-class Americans. By and large they are victims of exploitation in the production process. They view the solutions to the economic problem they face both as a result of racial oppression and class exploitation within the class structure of our society.

In considering strategic concepts based on realistic trends, one would have to ask: How would Negro steel, auto, rubber workers or coal miners respond to the slogan of the right of self-determination in the accepted usage as a solution to their problems? They are tied down to the production process of

U.S. capitalism. This is the arena of their struggle for freedom and equality.

Our program must start and end with the thought that to fight for black liberation is to fight against racism.

Our approach to the concept of black and white unity is a struggle against chauvinism, against all forms of discrimination. Ours is not only a moral plea. It is an argument based on the reality that social progress is only possible by black and white unity based on a struggle against racism.

Our program must be a witness to the unique quality of our Party. It must speak about and for a *working-class party* uniting black and white.

## The American Indians, Mexican-Americans, and Puerto Ricans

One of the new and very positive developments on our political landscape is the upsurge of struggle now emerging amongst other oppressed national minorities who, to one degree or another, are victims of special forms of oppression. There are important political and trade union developments amongst the 5 million Mexican-Americans. They are setting the pace in the organization of the migratory and agricultural workers of our country. Through their own political organizations, in alliance with others, they have become an important factor in the struggle for social progress. The American Indian nations are now emerging on the scene of battle. The government reservations—the oldest of American ghettos, the oldest of America's second-class caste systems, the oldest attempts at genocide, the victims of brutal oppression, since the first invasions, are now saying: We want our freedom, our equality, NOW!

The Puerto Rican community has emerged as an important political factor on the scene. Concentrated in the industrial centers, largely forced to live in the slums and working in the lower-paid jobs—they are also now emerging as a militant factor in the trade unions of mass production industries. They have become an important factor in the politics of industrial centers.

This upsurge has been stimulated by the sustained and heroic struggles of the Afro-Americans.

Our program must not only reflect this new upsurge. It must

reflect the qualitative shift that is taking place as a result of the close relationships developing between the different sectors of oppressed Americans.

We are witnessing a new melting pot of struggle that is coming to a boil.

## THE ANTI-MONOPOLY CONCEPT

Another general theme of the draft that has produced a lively discussion is the projected anti-monopoly concept. The discussion stretches from thoughts on how to state the problem better, how to eliminate possible misinterpretations, to proposals for replacing the concept altogether with some other generalized proposition. For example, there is a proposal to replace the "anti-monopoly concept" with an "anti-imperialist concept." Many of the thoughts on how to improve this section of the draft are very good and should be accepted. This includes thoughts on how to close some doors that may give an opening to the interpretation that monopoly is something different from capitalism. This will strengthen the section.

The proposals to improve the section should be accepted and the ideas that move in the direction of basically changing or eliminating the anti-monopoly concept should be rejected as unsound.

Our Party has a history of changing its attitude toward the anti-monopoly concept. It is a history of "off again and on again."

It is interesting that at different times we have dropped the concept from both the Left and Right sides of the political gang plank. It is also interesting that some of the elements who left our Party and are now in the so-called Left groups argued in the 17th Convention pre-convention discussion that we cannot have an anti-monopoly position and also be for peaceful coexistence. They argued for dropping the anti-monopoly position because they were supposedly for peaceful coexistence. This seeming contradiction resulted from an incorrect understanding of the anti-monopoly concept, but even more from their wrong understanding of the policy of peaceful coexistence. Browder dropped it because he wanted to shake hands with J. P. Morgan. Some "sects" dropped it because it was too "reformist."

It has also been a matter of debate in the world Communist movement. The Mao group in the leadership of the CPC has been

against it. Their special attack on the C.P. of Italy was centered against the anti-monopoly position of the Italian C.P. This, in spite of the fact that the Chinese Party has a long history of using similar strategic concepts. It is not surprising because Mao's concepts today are generally a denial of the history of the Chinese Revolution.

## An Intermediary Strategic Goal

Most of the opposition to the anti-monopoly idea is based on an over-all rejection of the fundamental Marxist concept of intermediate or strategic goals. It is a form of ignoring reality and projecting the skipping of stages in struggle. It is necessary to avoid the blueprinting of stages of struggle but it is incorrect to reject the concept of strategic intermediary goals to be reached.

This is a very basic question. In fact, it determines whether an organization is a narrow sect wallowing in its own stagnant pool or a mass party in the leadership of masses. Because if one rejects such concepts, there is no choice but to skip the present stage and project the straight leap to a socialist revolution. If this is only a matter in the realm of thought, then of course we are ready and willing to skip the stage. You should know that there are serious proposals in our pre-convention discussion to skip the stage of socialism also. They say—we in the USA are ready for Communism. This makes Mao's big leap look like skipping rope.

One's attitude toward a strategic concept of struggle also determines one's attitude toward alliances—united fronts—the struggle for democracy—the struggle for reforms generally.

If one either rejects the need for this concept or sees the mass movement for it limited to those convinced of socialism, then of course it would determine one's attitude toward alliances —including electoral alliances. And of course this concept also comes from a negative estimate of the power of the masses and an overestimation of the strength of monopoly power. Because then, one is convinced that there is nothing anyone can do about monopoly domination except by abolishing capitalism.

The idea of intermediate strategic goals, is that we walk with, talk with and unitedly fight with masses for strategic objectives that they are ready to fight for. It is also a goal we have to reach before we reach our goal of socialism. In fact most of

them are convinced now that they will part company with us when the halfway goals are reached. We don't think so. We have confidence we can convince them of the need to fight for socialism. Because we understand the inner logic of struggle, we talk, as we walk, about the system and about socialism. We can do so meaningfully only if we walk with them. Wherever possible we should have "Left" contingents but as a part of the march. We should have a Communist Party contingent—but as a part of the march—far enough in front to lead the way —close enough to the masses so as to be able to talk and walk with them. We can be close enough only if we can say "we are with you in our united efforts in reaching the first goal." We can say that without our "tongue in our cheek" because we are interested in the concessions that can be won while reaching the intermediate goals. It is an undeniable fact of life that this is the only way we are going to reach the goal of socialism. We can reach it only *with* the people who have so far agreed to go half-way only. So that is where the anti-monopoly concept fits in. It is an intermediary strategic goal.

In considering the practical side of a strategic concept, *we have to answer the following: Are there masses who will move into the struggle against the special oppressive role of monopoly before they understand capitalism or move as a conscious anti-capitalist or pro-socialist force? That's the key question. Are there such masses? If there are, then we have to make provisions for leadership to these masses. Or we have to ask the following question: Is it easier to expose capitalism as a system to masses who are in struggle but who are not anti-capitalist, by exposing the special brutal, inhuman nature of the monopoly feature of capitalism? I think it is.* This is the very purpose of strategic or tactical positions. Tactical and strategic positions are to provide exactly for this kind of a problem. If we say: "The order of the day is to socialism," then you don't need a different strategic concept; you do not need a different intermediary concept

These are longer range strategic concepts—but they influence our attitude on many questions of today. Because today's struggles already contain within them the movement for the strategic goals. If one has a narrow approach to the anti-monopoly concept, it will lead to various narrow concepts of relations with non-party masses and movements today.

## Some Questions In The Discussion

Now, let us consider some of the questions that have been raised in the discussion.

Why an anti-monopoly concept? Why not an anti-something else? Because in our opinion, it provides the best possible longer range goal; the best possible vehicle to get the greatest number of people walking and talking. The nature of monopoly capitalism dictates this.

Masses are in the struggle against monopoly oppression who do not yet see it as a part of a system and therefore are not consciously fighting the capitalist system. For many the struggle against the establishment is in fact a struggle against monopoly domination.

Why is it the best objective? Because the development of monopoly capitalism is the sharpest polarization of the super rich. Because there is a fierce drive by the top financial industrial dynasties for ever greater control and domination, for ever greater polarization. The anti-monopoly concept is the growing crystallization of the opposition to this domination. There is no other capitalist country in the world where the anti-monopoly struggle has as deep a meaning as in the U.S.A., for the simple reason that nowhere else has monopoly domination reached such a level.

Is this not the very heart of our present-day U.S. reality? The anti-monopoly concept is a reflection of this reality. It is a mass concept because the victims of monopoly are so numerous.

But this concept has other very positive attributes. It is easier to explain to the masses how monopoly is not only capitalism—but capitalism developed to its highest degree. This factor facilitates the passing of the anti-monopoly movement into a conscious anti-capitalist movement.

### *On Anti-Imperialism*

Now, does, for example, anti-imperialism provide the same kind of a strategic goal?

Anti-imperialism is a very basic concept of struggle. The crisis of the U.S. imperialist war policy has greatly expanded the base of anti-imperialism in the U.S.A. as well as in the world.

Objectively, all struggles against policies of U.S. aggression

are anti-imperialist. But fully conscious anti-imperialism—while growing—is not yet the base of the existing broad peace sentiment and movement in this country. Anti-imperialism is a higher and deeper level of ideological expression. This is so because it has a different relationship to the mass self-interest issues. Anti-imperialism in other countries—especially when it is projected as a struggle against the policies of U.S. imperialism—can be and is a very broad issue. It can be, and in some countries it is, the broadest issue. For us it is most important but it is not the same kind of a mass issue. Monopoly domination affects people differently. It is a direct challenge to the issues of self-interests of our people. Therefore, anti-imperialism cannot replace the issue of the concept of anti-monopoly. It should not be placed in opposition or as a substitute. Anti-imperialism has its own very special significance. It has its own self interest issues —including the question of survival. We must convince our Party and the Left of the crucial importance of developing a broader anti-imperialist consciousness. When we walk with those who are for peace for other reasons, we must talk about imperialism. Again, we can do so only if we do walk with peace marchers who are not yet conscious of anti-imperialism. There is no wall between the forces of imperialism and monopoly. In a basic sense we are dealing with one force, and very often the self interest issues that propel anti-imperialism and anti-monopoly movements also overlap.

***On The Struggle Against Capitalism***

It has also been stated that the struggle against monopoly is a struggle against capitalism and the struggle against capitalism is a struggle against monopoly.

That is again one of those shortcut formulations that lends itself to many interpretations. Because in one sense it is true. But, for example, if they are the same—some may conclude why separate them, why not say "down with capitalism" and be done with it? It would simplify matters.

In a basic discussion of concepts it is always necessary to state one's point of reference. This is the way of all science.

Science reaches closer to the truth with the phrase, "from this point of reference"; "from this vantage point it appears so and so."

So, if our point of reference is historical development, or the relationship between objective and subjective factors, or the dialectical law of interrelationship of things, or the inner logic of struggles— then the statement is a truth. Then the struggle against monopoly is a struggle against capitalism. It is such an obvious truth that one wonders whether it is stated for such obvious reasons.

Once such a truth is established, then one must ask: Is that all there is to the anti-monopoly concept?

If the anti-capitalist nature is all there is to the anti-monopoly concept—then we don't need it. We can do away with it and move directly to the anti-capitalist concept. Then we can do away with such intermediary or strategic concepts altogether.

We can do that—some of the Left groups have—but if we do, we will be walking alone—and in ever diminishing numbers. If one has concluded that our people will not fight against the domination of the monopolies, then the advancing of such a concept is justified. But then one must also face the reality that if that is so, then they are not ready to fight against capitalism either.

We have not reached that stage of struggle. We do not have as yet a revolutionary crisis at hand.

### *On The Struggle For Socialism*

We as a party cannot skip stages in our concepts, in our program—for the very stubborn reason that masses will not skip stages. This leads us to the question: What is the relationship of the anti-monopoly struggle to anti-capitalism or to the struggle for socialism?

Here again we must be clear—precisely what is our point of reference? Is our point of reference the historic relationship of how the struggle against monopolies is a feature of the anti-capitalist struggle and this then leads them to the struggle for socialism? If this is our point of reference, the answer is obvious: There is an important relationship. But because of this relationship can we therefore now describe the "anti-monopoly movement as being close to being socialist?" Or that "it is unthinkable to effectively curb monopoly power without resorting to socialist measures?"

Such an assessment tends again to eliminate the strategic con-

cept. It sees the anti-monopoly movement in too narrow terms. An anti-monopoly movement is democratic in its broad sweep. It is not necessary for us now to speculate exactly how far this movement will go along democratic lines—before it is forced into socialist measures. Even if we were convinced now that curbing monopoly will take socialist measures, would it argue for giving the *movement* a socialist context now? No, because life moves along its own laws.

### *"Actively Anti-Imperialist"*

Some in the discussion put forth the following idea—"the anti-monopoly coalition must be actively anti-imperialist."

If this is put forward as something we should work at, then we should say, we will work to raise the anti-imperialist understanding of the anti-monopoly forces. But if it is put forth as an assessment of the conscious ideological content of the anti-monopoly movement—or if the phrase "it must be actively anti-imperialist" is stated as a condition of our participation in the anti-monopoly movement—then in both cases it is wrong. Because if it is stated for the obvious reason that an anti-monopoly struggle is closely related to the anti-imperialist struggle, one asks again, why?

It is easy to put into a resolution things "that must be." It is especially easy if one is not seriously concerned about organizing or leading real people—but is rather construing concepts for some imaginary folk in some fantasy land. Anti-imperialism cannot be a condition for an anti-monopoly movement for the same reason that it cannot replace it.

The forces of monopoly and imperialism are by and large the same forces. Just how masses are victims of oppression determines how best to move them into action. How they see the issues of their self interest because of the oppression and exploitation is the starting point of all struggle.

In tactical and strategic matters, a Communist must in all seriousness view ideas from the point of reference of leading masses in struggle.

Also, our concepts must be tested and have the benefit of past experiences. For example, in view of experience, is it possible to state: "There is nothing that can be done about the aggressive armed forces of imperialism until the grip of monopoly is smashed

at home"? That defeats suffered by U.S. imperialism will have their effect on the grip of monopolies at home is true, but such defeats need not wait until such a grip is smashed. The questions are closely related—in fact they are a part of one question. But one should at least make some study of how these matters developed when the old imperialist empires were forced to retreat. The monopolies are still there, while the empires have been destroyed, or weakened.

### *On The Military-Industrial Complex*

Now, what about the military-industrial complex? Why not an anti-military-industrial complex concept instead of the anti-monopoly concept?

Is there substance to the military-industrial complex?

These are questions that have also come up in our discussions in many different ways. Eisenhower who popularized the phrase "military-industrial complex" used it in a narrow sense, to describe a danger from the combination of the military brass and the arms industry. He also talked about the influence of the military in government counsels.

The popular usage of the phrase remains as a description of that narrow area—the military and the arms industry. It is clear that it is not a phrase which describes either monopoly capitalism or state monopoly capitalism. Defenders of monopoly capitalism talk about the "military-industrial complex."

It leaves out the role of the state and the role of monopolies and places the military as something separate from both.

Therefore, it cannot be a substitute for the anti-monopoly concept.

It tends to blur class lines—and class concepts. We must always expose the class nature of the military and the class role of the state. It is not just industry that is involved. It is the development of monopoly capitalism that has brought on state monopoly capitalism. The "military-industrial complex" is a popular phrase that describes a feature of state monopoly capitalism. That is how the draft program very correctly deals with it.

There is nothing wrong with its popular usage. But it is not a substitute for describing class forces as they are in the USA today.

Some have also raised the question of how the program deals with the possibilities of an anti-monopoly government.

This is one of those projections where we are not in a position to round out a concept. Therefore, the draft deals with it in general and as a possibility. I think we should leave the question on that level. To project in definitive terms the concept of an anti-monopoly government does leave the impression of a stage, and it is possible that an anti-monopoly struggle may not result in such a government.

## A Concept of Struggle

The concept of intermediary strategic goals is good common sense. But more, it is common sense that has been verified by experience. There is no revolution on record that has not passed through some such way stations. Each revolution passes through and overcomes intermediary obstacles as they appear on the horizon before it passes on to the level of a socialist revolution.

They are not stages in the mechanical sense because in the process there is an overlapping of trends. The element of anti-capitalism is already in the anti-monopoly movement and there are anti-capitalist sections in it. As the struggle develops, the anti-capitalist element will grow and finally become the dominant factor in such movement. The length of time of these different phases also can vary from days to years.

The anti-monopoly movement may or may not take the form of a crystallized organized alliance. At this stage it is a movement of many forces, of many forms. The area where it will crystallize into an alliance most likely will be in the electoral arena. We should not blueprint it. Our program should keep it on the level of an overall concept of struggle. Each level of struggle will develop its own specific forces and forms.

The root source, the foundation for the development of monopoly capitalism is the exploitation of our working class at the point of production. Without this there would be no capitalism. This is the basic source of monopoly accumulated profits and capital.

Therefore, the anti-monopoly movement must rest on the class that faces monopoly at its base. Any idea that there can be a successful struggle against monopoly capitalism without the active

role of the working class is a fatal mistake. The working class is the prime victim of monopoly capitalism. Monopoly domination is a daily experience for the workers in the mass production industries.

So, when we give thought to the nature of an anti-monopoly movement—above all else we have to give thought to what is the best possible way of walking with, talking with and fighting together with our working class.

## NO AID TO ENEMIES OF SOCIALISM

In the name of being objective about the developments within the socialist world, some rather odd thoughts have appeared in our program discussion.

For example, the following published remarks of a member of a district executive board, in speaking about events in Poland and Czechoslovakia: "Unfortunately we don't know all of the facts" but continues, "I think we have an obligation to take a stand supporting those in the socialist countries that are struggling for their rights." This is not objectivity. It is an abstraction that has no meaning when applied to the realities of a socialist society.

Is it not necessary to ask, who is fighting for what "rights"? Are we obligated, for example, to support the efforts of the anti-socialist elements when they raise questions of their "rights"? Are these elements a factor in Czechoslovakia? Of course, they are.

Or, another State Committee member in speaking about how the radical youth raise questions of "community control," then adds: "Do the socialist countries today present us with an example of community control *of* anything"? And answers: "They do not."

Is this a way to discuss developments under socialism?

Is this an objective examination?

No, it is not. Other influences are at work here. This is how the liberals discuss socialism. These are anti-socialist concepts because they are falsehoods.

Democracy is not a non-political classless concept. The "rights" of the individual are not an abstraction. One's "right" are related to building a better society for all.

The building of a socialist democratic structure is not a struggle of the dispossessed against the ruling class. *It is a people in power building a democratic structure.* It is a structure that will not permit the destruction of socialism.

Yes, socialism is *"people's power." It is a democratic power.* To say it is not is to repeat the slander of the imperialists. In a basic sense socialist democracy is the most meaningful people's power in human history. The building of a socialist democratic structure is a process. It can not be separated from the building of the economic structure—or the human ideological structure. Not all who talk about "democracy" are for a socialist democracy or for socialism.

We are not antagonistic to socialist powers. They are working-class powers.

In the abstract, we do not support movements that are in opposition. We are not on the opposite side of the political fence from the Communist parties that are leading in the building of socialism.

Whatever criticism we may have will be made from that partisan viewpoint. We will make our own criticism not by supporting some "opposition" but as one working class party to another.

We are not going to give aid or comfort to enemies of socialism either in our land or in any other country.

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